JOHN NICHOLS

J.F.K. Autopsy Disputed

Pittsburgh, Pa. (AP)—A forensic pathologist who examined the records and materials of the autopsy performed on President John F. Kennedy said yesterday that accused assassin Lee Harvey Oswald could not have acted alone.

Dr. Cyril Wecht, Allegheny County coroner, said at a news conference a 2-day examination of the autopsy materials at the National Archives in Washington, convinced him it was "physically impossible" for only one gunman to have slain Kennedy.

Dr. Wecht's findings were in direct contradiction not only with the Warren Report conclusion that a single assassin was responsible for Kennedy's death, but also with a report by Dr. George K. Lattimer, the first private physician to examine the X rays.

Dr. Wecht said: "The fact is that the physical evidence shows that not any one person could have been a shooter. There had to have been at least two people shooting."

Dr. Wecht charged that the single-assassin finding of the lengthy Warren Report hinges on the theory that one bullet fired from a single gun wounded President Kennedy in the back seat of his limousine, and also wounded and passed through former Texas Gov. John Connally, who was riding in the front seat.

Dr. Lattimer made his report in January, about two months after the expiration of the Kennedy's 5-year ban on making public the material.

At that time, Dr. Lattimer, chairman of the department of urology at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, said he had no doubt that Kennedy was gunned down by a single assailant. He said the X rays proved that the front and rear wounds in the slain President were caused by the same bullet which passed through Kennedy's body and then struck Connally.

Dr. Wecht disagreed. "The magic bullet theory is the sine qua non of the Warren Report," he said. "It is absolutely untenable from a scientific standpoint.

"I was quite amazed at the pristine shape of the bullet," Dr. Wecht said. "When one examines the bullet and the various films, there can be little or no question that that bullet did not traverse the body of two men."

He declined to say how many gunmen he thought were involved.

Dr. Wecht, reached at his summer home in Milford, Conn., said Dr. Lattimer, of New York, "is a urologist and deals with kidneys. This is completely out of his field of expertise. . . ."

He also said Dr. Lattimer had spent only three or four hours in the archives. Dr. Wecht said Dr. Lattimer was chosen as the first private physician to examine the X rays "because he had made himself into a pro-government buff on this. . . .They sent Lattimer in there because they knew what he would say and what he would do."

Dr. Wecht said "they are the people who are eager to see to it that nothing is done to reopen this matter."

Dr. Wecht, a long-time critic of the Warren Report, said he based his findings on an examination last week of X rays, photographs, films, bullets anl bullet fragments.

He said several relevant items—including microscopic slides and Kennedy's brain, which he said was to have been preserved—were not made available to him.

"Looking at the X rays," he said, "I discovered a dark, brownish-black object inside the brain. . .nobody ever mentioned this previously. Nobody ever described it."

He did not say if he thought the object was a bullet.

Dr. Wecht said he will submit a proposal to Burke Marshall, executor of the Kennedy estate, for a full review of the autopsy materials by a team of experts.

Dr. Wecht, who is director of the Institute of Forensic Sciences at Duquesne University, was granted permission by Marshall to study the autopsy materials.